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9 October 1970SPECIAL INFORMATION REPORTSan Fernando Valley State College

Valley State, founded in 1948 as one of the 18 schools in the California state college system, became newsworthy nationally in November 1968. The incident began when a delegation of black students demanded the removal of the white freshman football coach on the grounds that he was prejudiced. When the athletic director refused, the campus of some 15,000 located in the upper middle-class community of Northridge, a Los Angeles suburb, was thrown into turmoil when the angry blacks marched to the administration building and occupied significant parts of it. Members of the faculty and administrative employees were detained against their will and the then acting president, Dr. Paul Blumgren, was forced to sign a statement agreeing to a list of student demands. Blumgren later repudiated the statement stating that it had been signed under threat of violence.

Several hundred arrests followed and the ringleaders were brought to trial and convicted in the fall of 1969. Most of those involved were convicted on felony charges and several were sentenced to terms in prison of from 1 to 25 years. The others were given lesser sentences. The trial was considered highly significant in legal circles in Los Angeles because the students had been tried and convicted on felony charges for campus demonstrations. Legal observers believed that the Valley State trial could signify a growing crackdown against youthful dissenters in California.

At the moment, the campus is quiet, and intelligence sources in Los Angeles believe it will remain so this year. The reasons they believe this, however, and the obvious political climate at Valley State are ominous and discouraging. Current information indicates a tense and highly politicized campus. The current student government which was elected by a political coalition of white radical, black and Mexican-American organizations counts 17 "new left" and "movement" activists among the total of 19 members. The student government at Valley State (as on most American campuses) controls the funding for all student

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organizations, and according to a reliable source it is becoming increasingly evident that those organizations not siding with the new left are losing their funding and their charter.

The campus is quiet compared to last year because the student government reportedly has the administrative and academic operations of the school seriously intimidated. They have the legal means to harass the administration at will to accomplish their objectives, hence, no need for violent confrontation. A member of the "movement" was recently heard to express the thought that this year radical objectives can be gained nonviolently.

Those groups active at Valley State are the Peoples' Revolution Group (the campus political party that controls the student government), the Black Student Union, Students for a Democratic Society (now only a few members), the Student Revolutionary Anarchist Family, International Workers of the World, the Social Action Corps, MECHA (a Mexican-American group), the Progressive Labor Party and the Che-Lamumba Club (more information about C-L Club below). There is little cohesion among them, however; and, as is the case nationally, they are all vying for radical leadership. Los Angeles intelligence officials flatly state that Valley State College is the most radical college in Southern California in terms of membership numbers and the ability of the old and new left to control student activities.

Racially, the situation is quiet but tense. Minority students are reportedly still fuming over what they (and the American Civil Liberties Union) regarded as harsh punishment handed out by Judge Brandler to Negro students for the November 1968 incident. The two whites involved were convicted on misdemeanor charges only. (All 20 who were sentenced, incidentally, exhausted all appeals and all served about 6 months. They have now been released and reportedly several have returned to school at Valley State.) The BSU at Valley State is regarded by intelligence sources in Los Angeles as the strongest in the United States. At present, the BSU is reportedly angry over 24 recent indictments of their people handed down by the Los Angeles county district attorney in connection with campus disturbances last year.

The student newspaper, the Sundial, is oriented to the left and under the funding control of the student government. Token faculty guidance and virtually no censorship characterize Sundial operations. Financial support comes from the general fund (student fees paid at time of registration).

In addition to the normal courses offered, several borderline radical subjects are officially taught at Valley State. Two such courses are Social Change and Problems of Cultural Change. Additionally, there is an "experimental college" on campus (using college facilities but not college funds) that is operated by white and black radicals and Chicanos offering, for no credit, the usual offbeat subjects such as Hypnosis, Yoga, Astrology, Occult Sciences, etc. Finally, offered off campus by the Che-Lamumba Club, are such subjects as Revolution and Kidnapping and Hijacking. Reportedly, the as yet unidentified instructor of Kidnapping and Hijacking is Cuban and believed to be a Cuban agent. The club has been infiltrated by police intelligence officers who also plan to enroll in Kidnapping and Hijacking.

The State of California has decided to reduce drastically the size of Valley State over the next several years. The purpose for the reduction is unclear but is believed ostensibly to be alleviation of overcrowding and promotion of the image of a community college. The reduction of admissions has also caused serious problems for the school. A year ago, the administration agreed to accept 700 minority students each year to balance the overall enrollment ethnically. Now that admissions are down 50 per cent, the blacks and Chicanos are not willing to sustain a 50 per cent cut in minority admissions.

With all of its problems, Valley State still educates many moderates and conservatives. Radicals there probably number between 5 and 10 per cent (very high, most observers believe 2 per cent is about the standard on American campuses). Just a few days ago, Jesse M. Unruh, a prominent California politician and present Democratic candidate for governor, gave rough treatment to a student heckler to the applause of most of the 2,000 students in attendance.

In summary, San Fernando Valley State College is politically troubled and racially tense. The odds are that the school will get through the year without bombings and without violence, but no one will be surprised if it does not make it.